

PCTWORLD INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY ORGANIZATION
International Bureau

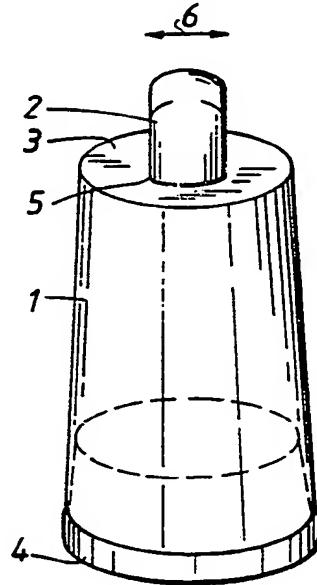
INTERNATIONAL APPLICATION PUBLISHED UNDER THE PATENT COOPERATION TREATY (PCT)

(51) International Patent Classification 5 : B65D 17/40, 35/44 // B29C 45/00		A1	(11) International Publication Number: WO 92/00224 (4) International Publication Date: 9 January 1992 (09.01.92)
<p>(21) International Application Number: PCT/SE91/00181</p> <p>(22) International Filing Date: 11 March 1991 (11.03.91)</p> <p>(30) Priority data: 9002310-2 2 July 1990 (02.07.90) SE</p> <p>(71) Applicant (<i>for all designated States except US</i>): NORDEN PAC DEVELOPMENT AB [SE/SE]; Box 845, S-391 28 Kalmar (SE).</p> <p>(72) Inventor; and</p> <p>(75) Inventor/Applicant (<i>for US only</i>): LINNÉR, Hans [SE/SE]; Jutnabbevägen 15, S-392 43 Kalmar (SE).</p> <p>(74) Agents: GRAUDUMS, Valdis et al.; Albihn West AB, Box 142, S-401 22 Göteborg (SE).</p>		<p>(81) Designated States: AT, AT (European patent), AU, BB, BE (European patent), BF (OAPI patent), BG, BJ (OAPI patent), BR, CA, CF (OAPI patent), CG (OAPI patent), CH, CH (European patent), CM (OAPI patent), DE, DE (European patent), DK, DK (European patent), ES, ES (European patent), FI, FR (European patent), GA (OAPI patent), GB, GB (European patent), GR (European patent), HU, IT (European patent), JP, KP, KR, LK, LU, LU (European patent), MC, MG, ML (OAPI patent), MR (OAPI patent), MW, NL, NL (European patent), NO, PL, RO, SD, SE, SE (European patent), SN (OAPI patent), SU, TD (OAPI patent), TG (OAPI patent), US.</p> <p>Published <i>With international search report.</i></p>	

(54) Title: DISPOSABLE CONTAINER FOR SINGLE DOSAGE APPLICATIONS

(57) Abstract

A thermoplastic, disposable container for single dosage applications having a body portion (1) and two end walls (3, 4) with closure means covering an outlet in one of said walls, wherein the closure means comprises a break-off, hollow extension (2) of the container, thereby allowing the container to be opened with one hand.



FOR THE PURPOSES OF INFORMATION ONLY

Codes used to identify States party to the PCT on the front pages of pamphlets publishing international applications under the PCT.

AT	Austria	ES	Spain	MG	Madagascar
AU	Australia	FI	Finland	ML	Mali
BB	Barbados	FR	France	MN	Mongolia
BE	Belgium	GA	Gabon	MR	Mauritania
BF	Burkina Faso	GB	United Kingdom	MW	Malawi
BG	Bulgaria	GN	Guinea	NL	Netherlands
BJ	Benin	GR	Greece	NO	Norway
BR	Brazil	HU	Hungary	PL	Poland
CA	Canada	IT	Italy	RO	Romania
CF	Central African Republic	JP	Japan	SD	Sudan
CG	Congo	KP	Democratic People's Republic of Korea	SE	Sweden
CH	Switzerland	KR	Republic of Korea	SN	Senegal
CI	Côte d'Ivoire	LJ	Liechtenstein	SU	Soviet Union
CM	Cameroon	LK	Sri Lanka	TD	Chad
CS	Czechoslovakia	LU	Luxembourg	TC	Togo
DE	Germany	MC	Monaco	US	United States of America
DK	Denmark				

TITLE:

Disposable Container for Single Dosage Applications

5

TECHNICAL FIELD

The present invention relates to a thermoplastic, disposable container according to the preamble of claim 1 and a method of its manufacture according to the preamble 10 of claim 6. The invention also relates to an end closure for a container according to the preamble of claim 8.

BACKGROUND

There is an increasing demand for containers which can 15 hold sufficient contents for a single application. A typical use for such containers is in hotels where, for example hair shampoo and bathwater additives are provided for the guest. In the past these toiletries has been provided in a tear-open laminated plastic/foil sachet or 20 in a small screw top bottle which can have a tamper-evident seal.

These prior art containers share the same disadvantage, i.e. a two-handed operation is required to gain access to 25 contents.

EP-A-0 076 418 describes a method for manufacturing an injection-moulded container having a break-off cap to facilitate the opening of the container. The cap is 30 formed as an extention of the neck region of the container and, during the injection-moulding, a weakened region is formed in the exterior surface of the container. Whilst such a container is easier to open than the previously mentioned containers, the container 35 according to EP-A-0 076 418 displays several disadvantages, most notably that a complicated mould arrangement is needed due to the exterior weakened region. Additionally, said region of weakening is not particularly attractive, whilst the non-uniform thickness

displayed by the neck- and cap portions can lead to irregular cooling of the container after moulding.

PROBLEM AND SOLUTION

5 Accordingly a need exists for a disposable container which can be opened one-handedly and which is inexpensive to produce.

This need is satisfied by a container according to claim
10 1 which can be manufactured according to the method of claim 6. An end closure which can be applied to any suitable container body portion to satisfy the said need is specified in claim 8.

15 According to the present invention, the weakened region is in the form of a region of material of reduced thickness provided on the inside of the container, thereby allowing the container to be axially withdrawn from its mould after the injection-moulding has been
20 carried out. Furthermore, since the region of thinner material is inside the container, no detrimental weakening lines mar the external appearance of the container.

25 In use, such containers can be picked up with one hand and the extension thereon broken off through pressure exerted by the thumb, or a finger, of the same hand.

30 Preferred embodiments of the present invention are detailed in the dependent claims.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

35 Further advantages of, and applications for, the container of the present invention will become evident from the following description with reference to the drawings in which

Figs. 1 and 2 show a front, respectively side,elevation of a container according to the present invention;

Fig. 3

5 shows in cross-section an end closure with an extension moulded integrally therewith according to a second aspect of the present invention;

Fig. 4.

10 shows a further embodiment of the invention in which the remote end of the container is weldably pinched together;

Fig. 5 shows a profiled end wall and extension combination, and

Fig. 6 shows a partial section through the end wall and extension of the container according to Fig. 5.

15

BEST MODE OF CARRYING OUT THE INVENTION

With reference to Figures 1 and 2, reference numeral 1 denotes the body portion of a plastic container having an integral, hollow extension 2 on an end wall 3. The other 20 end of the container is closed by an end wall 4. In the example shown, the container has a substantially cylindrical form, though the cross-section of the container could be of any shape, for example poly-sided.

25

The extension 2 is moulded integrally with the body portion, or walls, and may be mounted on any wall, i.e. on an end wall as shown, or on the body portion. The extension intersects the wall upon which it is moulded at substantially right angles.

30

A typical container may have a diameter of 30 mm a body portion length of 60 mm, an extension length of 15 mm and a wall thickness of less than 1 mm.

35

To produce such a container, an outer die adapted to the desired form of the exterior of the container and an

inner die corresponding to the inner form of the container are used. A gap is maintained between the outer die and inner die which is substantially uniform except for at a region corresponding to the intersection of the extension 2 with the end wall 3. At this region, a line of thinner material is formed by means of a shoulder or chamfer on the inner die. This line of thinner material corresponds to the line of breakage joining the extension 2 to the end wall 3 and may extend around a major portion 10 of the circumferential base section of the extension.

The container may then be filled with the desired contents and the end wall 4 remote from the extension 2 then fixed to the container by any known means, for 15 example hot welding.

In use, when sufficient pressure is exerted in, for example, the direction of arrow 6 (Fig. 2), the material at the intersection 5 will shear, thereby revealing an opening in the container which corresponds in shape to the circumferential base section of the extension. The shape of the circumferential base section need not be rectangular as shown in Figures 1 and 2, but may be any shape, for example round or poly-sided.

25 In Figures 1 and 2 the extension and its cooperating end wall, together with the cylindrical body portion, are moulded integrally, i.e. in one piece. However, as shown in Fig. 3, in a further aspect of the present invention the extension may be moulded integrally with an end or body portion and then fixed to the remainder of the container in any suitable manner, for example by hot welding.

30 Thus, the end closure in Fig. 3 comprises an end wall 3 having on one of its major surfaces a hollow extension 2

- extending therefrom. In the region of the intersection 5 between the end wall 3 and the hollow extension 2 a line of thinner material is formed as described above. To facilitate the fixing of the end closure to a container body portion 1, the end closure is provided with a circumferential flange 7 which extends substantially perpendicularly from the end wall 3 in a direction away from the extension 2. A second circumferential flange 8 extending in the same direction as the first flange is located radially within the first flange 7. The gap between the two flanges 7,8 substantially corresponds to the wall thickness of the container to which the end closure is to be affixed.
- In Fig. 4 an end closure is shown in which the end wall is formed by pressing together the body portion or walls immediately adjacent the filling opening and then welding the wall or walls to form a seam.
- From Fig. 5 it can be seen that the end wall need not be flat, but may be profiled to give a more aesthetic shape, whilst still providing a line of weakness at the intersection 5 between the end wall and the extension. This line of weakness is most clearly shown in Fig. 6. and, in this case, is formed by a substantially flat-faced shoulder on the (not shown) inner die of the injection-moulding apparatus.
- Naturally, the invention is not limited to that described above, but may be varied within the scope of the appended claims. For example, the line of weakness need not extend around the entire circumferential base section of the hollow extension, but instead a non-weakened region may be left which acts as a plastic hinge for the hollow extension after an opening force has been applied thereto.

CLAIMS

5

1. A thermoplastic, disposable container for single dosage applications having a body portion (1) and two end walls (3, 4) with a break-off closure means covering an outlet in said container, characterized in that said closure means comprises a hollow extension (2) of the container, which extension (2) is arranged to be broken away from the container along a breakage line formed by a region of thinner material substantially at an intersection (5) between the base of the extension (2) and a wall (1, 3, 4) of the container, with said breakage line being invisible from the outside of the container.

10 2. Container according to claim 1, characterized in that the extension (2) is located on an end wall (3) of the container.

15 3. Container according to claim 2, characterized in that the body portion (1) and said combined extension/end wall (2, 3) are integrally moulded.

25

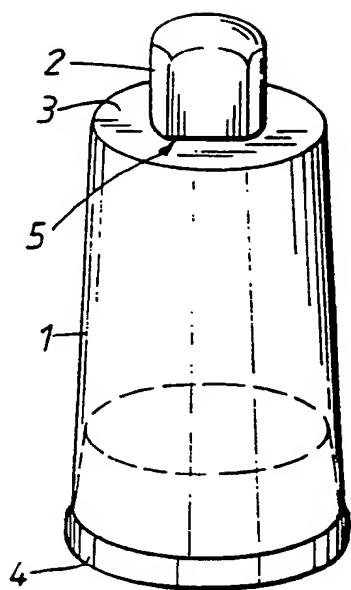
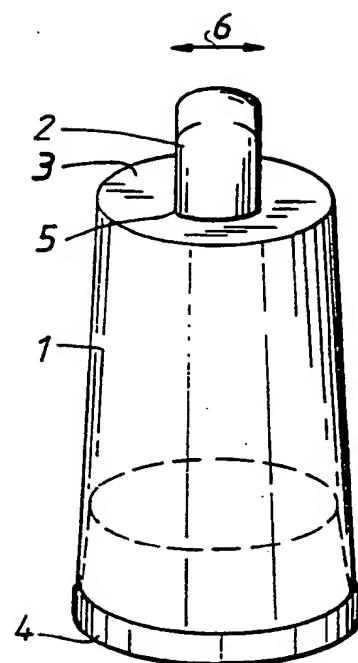
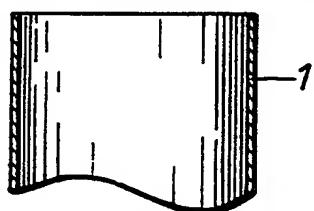
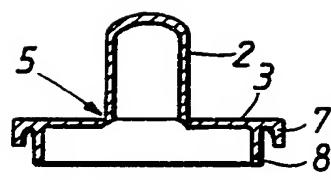
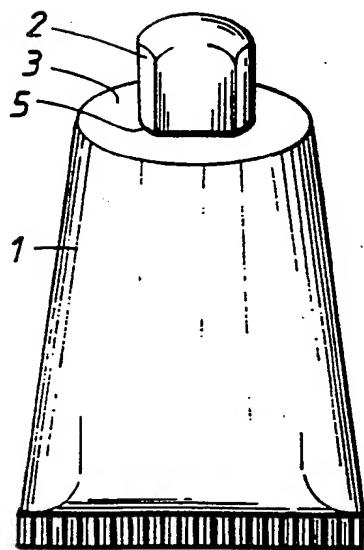
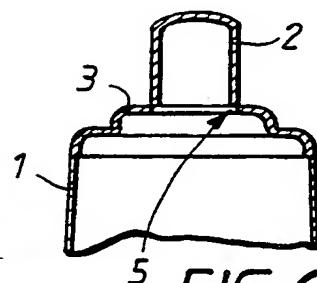
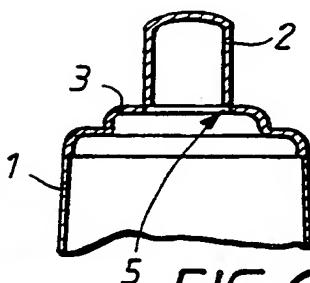
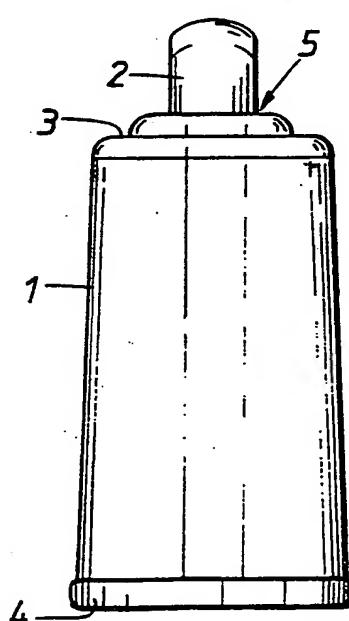
4. Container according to claim 2, characterized in that the end wall (4) remote from the combined extension/end wall (2, 3) is fitted to the container after the container has been filled through the opening which this end wall (4) is to seal.

30 5. Container according to claim 1, characterized in that the body portion (1) of the container is a cylinder and that the end walls (3, 4) extend perpendicularly from the inner wall of the cylinder.

6. Method of injection-moulding a container according to any of the previous claims, using an outer die adapted to the desired form of the exterior of the container and an inner die corresponding to the inner 5 form of the container, characterized in that a gap is maintained between the outer die and inner die which is substantially uniform except for at a region corresponding to the intersection of the extension (2) with the end wall (3) whereat a shoulder or chamfer on 10 the inner die results in, after the injection-moulding, a line of thinner material corresponding to the line of breakage joining the extension (2) to the end wall (3).

7. Method of injection-moulding a container according 15 to claim 6, characterized in that the end wall remote from the combined extension/end wall (2, 3) is formed by pressing together the body portion (1) immediately adjacent the filling opening and welding the wall (1) or walls to form a seam.

20 8. An end closure suitable for closing an end of a container body portion, which end closure comprises an end wall (3) with first and second major surfaces, characterized in that a hollow extension (2) of 25 said end wall (3) extends from an intersection (5) between the end wall (3) and the hollow extension (2) substantially perpendicularly away from said first major surface, and in that a region of thinner material is provided at the intersection (5), thereby creating a line 30 of weakness at said intersection, and in that means (7,8) are provided on the second major surface of the end wall to facilitate attachment of said end closure to a container body portion.

FIG.1FIG.2FIG.3FIG.4FIG.5FIG.6

INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT

International Application No PCT/SE 91/00181

I. CLASSIFICATION OF SUBJECT MATTER (if several classification symbols apply, indicate all)⁶

According to International Patent Classification (IPC) or to both National Classification and IPC
IPC5: B 65 D 17/40, 35/44//B 29 C 45/00

II. FIELDS SEARCHED

Minimum Documentation Searched⁷

Classification System	Classification Symbols
IPC5	B 65 D; B 29 C

Documentation Searched other than Minimum Documentation
 to the Extent that such Documents are Included in Fields Searched⁸

SF, DK, FI, NO classes as above

III. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT⁹

Category ¹⁰	Citation of Document, ¹¹ with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages ¹²	Relevant to Claim No. ¹³
X	EP, A3, 0076418 (MONTALBETTI, ERMENEGILDO) 13 April 1983, see page 6, line 20 - page 7, line 2; claims 1-8 --	1-8
X	DE, A1, 2500640 (AB AAKERLUND & RAUSING) 17 July 1975, see the whole document --	1,2
X	FR, A, 1347236 (M. VALER FLAX) 18 November 1963, see figure 1 --	1
X	FR, A, 1181592 (TUBOPLAST-FRANCE (S.A.)) 17 June 1959, see figure 2 --	1

* Special categories of cited documents:¹⁰

- "A" document defining the general state of the art which is not considered to be of particular relevance
- "E" earlier document but published on or after the international filing date
- "L" document which may throw doubts on priority claim(s) or which is cited to establish the publication date of another citation or other special reason (as specified)
- "O" document referring to an oral disclosure, use, exhibition or other means
- "P" document published prior to the international filing date but later than the priority date claimed

"T" later document published after the international filing date or priority date and not in conflict with the application but cited to understand the principle or theory underlying the invention

"X" document of particular relevance, the claimed invention cannot be considered novel or cannot be considered to involve an inventive step

"Y" document of particular relevance, the claimed invention cannot be considered to involve an inventive step when the document is combined with one or more other such documents, such combination being obvious to a person skilled in the art

"&" document member of the same patent family

IV. CERTIFICATION

Date of the Actual Completion of the International Search	Date of Mailing of this International Search Report
27th June 1991	1991-07-09
International Searching Authority	Signature of Authorized Officer <i>Ulrika Drange</i>

SWEDISH PATENT OFFICE

III. DOCUMENTS CONSIDERED TO BE RELEVANT		(CONTINUED FROM THE SECOND SHEET)
Category	Citation of Document, with indication, where appropriate, of the relevant passages	Relevant to Claim No
A	US, A, 4733801 (SCAMMELL) 29 March 1988, see the whole document --	6,7
A	US, A, 4243620 (CURETTI ET AL) 6 January 1981, see the whole document -- -----	6,7

**ANNEX TO THE INTERNATIONAL SEARCH REPORT
ON INTERNATIONAL PATENT APPLICATION NO.PCT/SE 91/00181**

This annex lists the patent family members relating to the patent documents cited in the above-mentioned international search report.
 The members are as contained in the Swedish Patent Office EDP file on **91-05-29**
 The Swedish Patent Office is in no way liable for these particulars which are merely given for the purpose of information.

Patent document cited in search report	Publication date	Patent family member(s)		Publication date
EP-A3- 0076418	83-04-13	JP-A-	58075561	83-05-07
DE-A1- 2500640	75-01-09	CH-A- FR-A- GB-A- JP-A- NL-A- SE-B-C- SE-A- US-A-	588390 2257500 1469010 50117600 7416961 380498 7400286 3949871	77-05-31 75-08-08 77-03-30 75-09-13 75-07-14 75-11-10 75-07-11 76-04-13
FR-A- 1347236	63-11-18	NONE		
FR-A- 1181592	59-06-17	NONE		
US-A- 4733801	88-03-29	AU-B- AU-D- CA-A- EP-A- WO-A-	576070 5512486 1262023 0216807 86/04856	88-08-11 86-09-10 89-10-03 87-04-08 86-08-28
US-A- 4243620	81-06-01	AT-B- CA-A- CH-A- DE-A-C- FR-A-B- GB-A- JP-C- JP-A- JP-B- US-A-	364761 1077217 595969 2626342 2314042 1555381 1316995 51151773 60047086 4324541	81-11-10 80-05-13 78-02-28 76-12-23 77-01-07 79-11-07 86-05-15 76-12-27 85-10-19 82-04-13